



CHALLENGES REGARDING SOCIETAL SECURITY IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

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Societal security essentially refers to the sustainability of traditional models of language, culture, traditions, religion, and national identity, under acceptable conditions for evolution. The European Union is both a space inhabited by over 430 million inhabitants (natives, minorities, immigrants) and a space of many cultures and the manifestation of societal security. Strengthening state and societal resilience within the EU and in the neighborhood helps to reduce and stop various security threats. National political efforts to reduce vulnerabilities, foster pluralism, coexistence and respect, as well as deepen relations with national minorities, indigenous peoples and immigrants, make a decisive contribution to strengthening societal resilience. Through this article we want to highlight theoretical aspects of societal security, but also some challenges to social security in the European Union.

Keywords: societal security; European Union; identity; threats; vulnerabilities; migration.

Brief theoretical presentation of the concept of social security

The concept of social security appeared for the first time in the already well-known book "Peoples, States and Fear. The issue of national security in international relations", written by Barry Buzan.

Since the early 1990s, Barry Buzan, along with Ole Wæver, Jaap de Wilde and other collaborators, have reinvented and reinterpreted this concept by transforming social security into a cornerstone of the Copenhagen School. By the end of the 1990s, other additional concepts had been developed within this school, and the concept of social security had lost some of its central place; however, it remains the most innovative concept of the Copenhagen School¹.

According to the Copenhagen School, "social security refers to the perceived ability of a community to survive, i.e. to the sustainability of traditional models of language, culture, traditions, religion, national identity, in conditions acceptable to evolution"². From this definition the two dimensions of social security are deduced: the objective dimension, which refers to the preservation of group markers, such as language

and customs, and the subjective dimension, which refers to the survival of the community, as a place of identification for its members.

Security concerns exist at all levels of the international system and interact with perceptions of security in other sectors, either constructive or destructive, but it is important to note that the rise of social security in security studies has had both intra-scientific roots in the general trend of orientation towards identity, culture and constructivism, as well as extra-scientific roots in the predominant ethnic conflicts after the Cold War (especially those in Europe)³.

The object of reference of social security is not the state, but "any kind of larger groups (...); In the current world system, the most important objects of reference in the societal system are: tribes; castles; clans; nations and ethnic units similar to nations, called minorities; civilizations, religions and race"⁴.

The organizing concept in the societal sector is identity. "Societal insecurity exists when communities of any kind define an evolution or potential as a threat to their survival as community [entities]"⁵.

According to the classification made by Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde, the most common threats⁶ to social security are: *migration* – people X is invaded or diluted by influxes of people Y, community X will no longer be what it was due to that the population will be made up

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of other people, i.e. the identity of Y is changed by a transformation in the composition of the population; *horizontal competition* – although there are still X people living there, they will change due to the cultural and linguistic influence generated by the expansion of the Y neighbors' culture; *vertical competition* – people will stop seeing themselves as X, either because there is an integrative project (like the EU, etc.) or a regionalist secessionist (like Quebec, Catalonia, etc.) that pushes them either to broader identities or to narrower ones; *depopulation* – due to disease, war, hunger, natural disasters or policies of extermination, only if it destroys the society, becomes a matter of social security.

Of course, in practice, combinations of these categories of threats to identity can occur and can take place on a spectrum that has international, programmatic and political threats at one end, and unintentional and structural threats at the other⁷.

The European Union – a space for the manifestation of social security

The 27 EU Member States, with a population of over 430 million⁸, it forms a space of ethnic, religious, linguistic diversity and a space for the widespread manifestation of social security.

The picture of the EU's demographic composition is complex. Along with the native population of the Member States, there are three types of ethnic minorities⁹, respectively: *indigenous peoples*, such as the Sami or Lappish populations of Sweden and Finland; *immigrants*, who come either from outside the EU or from the European continent (especially those from Central and South-Eastern Europe) or from outside it, such as: Turks and Kurds in Germany and Belgium; Algerians, Moroccans, Tunisians in France; Moroccans in Spain; Turks, Indonesians, Moroccans in the Netherlands; Albanians, Moroccans, Slovenes, Tunisians in Italy; *national or historical minorities*, such as: Basques in Spain; Hungarians in Romania, Slovenia and Slovakia; sorbets in Germany; the Germans in Alsace and Lorraine (France); the Turks in Bulgaria; Albanians, Vlachs, Macedonians and Turks in Greece. The EU motto "United in diversity" reflects the complexity of this picture.

The cultural richness of the Union is represented by the diversity of cultures and traditions, in which one of the most relevant aspects is linguistic diversity.

According to official sources¹⁰, there are three alphabets and 24 official languages in the EU; another 60 languages are commonly spoken in certain regions or by specific groups; the number of languages spoken in the EU has increased with immigration. Linguistic diversity and intercultural dialogue are the pillars on which EU language policy is based. To transform cultural diversity to an advantage, initiatives to support linguistic diversity are diverse: language learning, programs such as the Creative Europe program¹¹, which supports literary translation, or the celebration of the European Day of Languages, annually on 28 September. According to the EU Council Resolution on the European Strategy for Multilingualism of 21 November 2008, "existing linguistic diversity adds value to the development of economic and cultural relations between the European Union and the rest of the world, strengthens social cohesion, intercultural dialogue and European construction"¹².

Migration – threat and related vulnerabilities to EU social security

The social security dimension has opened and opens up various topics aimed at solving identity problems, managing the relations between its reference objects and the conflicts generated by their "collision". In 2007, referring to the developing role of social security, Professor Mark Rhinard noted that this "is not only the meaning of existing developments, but prescribes the direction for the future"¹³. A good example of the realization of the statement "prescribe the direction for the future" is one of the priorities of the EU's external action – "state and societal resilience in the neighborhood"¹⁴.

Among the most common threats to EU social security, mentioned by Barry Buzan, Ole Waever and Jaap de Wilde, migration remains the main threat, with an impact on the cohesion and identity of society, fundamental elements of the concept of social security.

The impact of this phenomenon on European security can be identified more strongly when migrants outnumber the basic population, which leads to the creation of new communities of people, by redefining the identity of the population, not only its structure but also the whole culture, the culture of migrants. becoming the dominant culture¹⁵.



Thus, as Berry Buzan considered, "the danger posed by migration is mainly a matter of how the relative number of emigrants interacts with society's absorption and adaptation capacities"¹⁶.

Initially, the phenomenon of migration was approached from a purely sociological perspective, with implications in the social plan of the European Union¹⁷, but later, the complexity of its effects also influenced the security of the European Union, in its other dimensions, especially in the economic one. It induced them, for example, on the labor market.

The European space has always been the main geographical area for migratory flows, people who migrated for various reasons that led them to arrive in Europe, namely "to escape political oppression, war and poverty and to reunite the family, to seek opportunities entrepreneurship, knowledge and education"¹⁸.

Migration to the European Union has evolved as Community construction has expanded, from a strictly economic dimension to the regulation of freedom of movement by the Treaty of Rome, adopted in 1957 and entered into force in 1958, as an essential component for the normal development of any society democratic, with multiple ramifications in all sectors of social life.

The initial regulatory framework on migration was also complemented by the provisions of the Schengen Agreement adopted in 1985 and entered into force in 1995, which had a double meaning¹⁹, in the sense that the free movement of persons is one of the four foundations of the European Union which conferred the right of any citizen of an EU Member State to reside in another State in order to pursue a profession and, at the same time, eliminate formalities and internal border controls between Member States. A significant role in the evolution of the migration issue was played by the provisions of the Amsterdam Treaty adopted in 1997 and entered into force in 1999 by which the European Union became an "area of freedom, security and justice".

The consolidated version of the EU Treaty and the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, both signed in 2007 and entered into force in 2009, are the current basis for regulating migration in a context where illegal migration is one of the threats to EU Member States and requires an approach on migration and asylum, drawing on the realities facing the international community²⁰.

The complexity of the migration phenomenon derives from its direct implications on the social security of both the European Union and the Member States, which required the adoption of unitary European policies to ensure the full adaptation of migrants in their countries of residence, but also the preservation of the country's culture, origin, based on "the aspiration for the integration of all the peoples of Europe"²¹.

The evolution of migration in the EU must be analyzed in the context of the phenomenon of globalization, which involves both economic and cultural changes in the world society²² and leading to "raising living standards in developing and sometimes poor countries"²³.

The issue of migration must be approached from a double perspective, respectively, both in terms of the country of origin and destination of migrants, in order to create a balance between benefits and losses for both parties, being a constantly evolving phenomenon in the condition of population growth, preferences for certain areas of activity or instability in certain areas.

If in the beginning migrants were engaged in the labor market mainly in carrying out activities that involved unskilled work for which employers paid them much less than their own citizens, now European countries are increasingly looking for workers skilled in their respective fields, highly skilled, which leads to an increase in the economy in the destination space.

Weakening the cohesion of EU nations and minorities across the Union is, in our view, the main vulnerability to EU social security. In order to reduce this vulnerability and strengthen the resilience of states and societies and to meet the objectives of the Europe 2000 strategy, EU cohesion policy (regional policy) for the period 2014-2020 has set 11 thematic objectives and a budget of € 1,082 billion²⁴ to reduce economic and social disparities. and territorial differences between the various regions and Member States of the European Union and improving the quality of life.

Other solutions identified by European leaders for strengthening societal ties are the following: increased mobility, cultural exchanges, educational exchanges, research cooperation, civil society platforms (e.g. the Cultural Platform for Intercultural Europe, a civil society initiative inspired by the European Year of Dialogue intercultural 2008)²⁵.

From this perspective, today, Europe is no longer a point of attraction only in terms of finding a job, but it is also of interest to students. In this sense, the Erasmus program aims, on the one hand, to integrate them into the labor market and to acquire social inclusion, through investments in human resources and, on the other hand, to improve the educational systems of states, ensuring access to education for migrants and providing real employment opportunities, similar to those of the citizens of the state in which they are located.

Conclusions

In today's dynamic security environment, it is certain that threats to social security will continue to exist, but EU Member States must take common steps to identify, manage and limit them²⁶.

In this regard, a package of measures with such a horizontal dimension should be adopted, respectively with the involvement of all internal state authorities for the application of existing laws and the improvement of the legislative framework but also for the management of borders through judicial cooperation between political and economic bodies, financial institutions and non-governmental bodies, as well as a vertical dimension of security, in which case European, regional and international cooperation with the development of common unitary policies, agreements and initiatives at EU and Member State level is essential.

Of particular importance in ensuring social security in the EU is a comprehensive approach to mechanisms for anticipation, prevention and early warning in order to detect and prevent risks and threats to social security. It is based on mutual trust between states, on a real-time exchange of information but also on intense integrated cooperation within the Standing Committee on Operational Cooperation on Internal Security (COSI), which brings together relevant EU agencies and bodies, and may invite bodies such as Europol, Frontex, Eurojust, Cpol and others to attend meetings as observers.

All these are performed in a situation in which the threats to social security in the EU caused by the phenomenon of migration are increasingly significant, if we take into account the fact that in 2018 a number of 2.4 million immigrants from non-euro countries entered the EU with 27 member states and on January 1, 2019 were settled in the EU,

from non-EU countries, a number of 21.8 million people (4.9%) of the 446.8 million European inhabitants²⁷.

It is clear that in this age, effective security of the EU cannot be ensured without taking into account its external dimension, as internal security depends to a large extent on the EU's external security, the way in which the global approach to security is all EU states is crucial in the successful management and guarantee of their social security.

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